

HEALTH BENEFITS E-NEWS

*Department of Human Resource Management
Office of Health Benefits*

February 1, 2006

Open Enrollment Dates Set for Spring 2006

Open Enrollment for health benefits and flexible reimbursement accounts will be held this spring from **Friday, April 14 through Monday, May 15, 2006**. We are in the process of developing communications materials, including the Spotlight on Open Enrollment newsletter, and will provide additional details in coming months.

Agency Request for Assistance Form Updated

The Office of Health Benefits developed a new form last summer for state agency requests to process a health benefits action. To further streamline the procedure, we have updated the form to include a line for the agency fax number along with agency/payroll group number, agency name, agency contact's name, telephone number and e-mail address. The form is on the DHRM Web site and posted under Compensation and Benefits, Resources for Benefits Administrators, Forms. The direct link is: www.dhrm.virginia.gov/resources/benefitsadmin/RequestForAssistanceForm.pdf.

Please complete the Agency section of the form and fax it, with appropriate documentation, to the Office of Health Benefits at (804) 371-0231. **This form replaces the Benefits Administrator Contact Sheet or other forms developed by your agency.** Questions on the new process and form should be directed to the OHB e-mail address: hbp@dhrm.virginia.gov.

Prompt BES Keying Necessary for Medicare Retiree Group Enrollments and Terminations

As we continue to work through the new processes associated with moving our Medicare-eligible retiree group participants into the enhanced Medicare Part D prescription drug coverage that is now a part of the Advantage 65 Plan, we have discovered a problem. Medco is currently assigning an effective date of coverage that is prospective to the date that they receive the BES eligibility file. For example, if you key a new retirement, new Medicare-eligibility, or new long-term disability for a Medicare-eligible participant on February 1 with a February 1 effective date, the file will reach Medco on February 2 and Medco will assign a March 1 effective date. While we are working with Medco to correct the problem, early keying (at least two business days before the effective date) will help to ensure that the file gets to Medco and then to Medicare so that the enrollment can be approved for Medicare Part D coverage in a timely manner. Since the eligibility information now has to go to Medicare in addition to Medco, early keying will continue to assure timely access to benefits, even after the prospective effective date problem is corrected.

While we are aware that retroactive keying is sometimes unavoidable, please be aware of the potential effective date problem that is likely to result from keying Medicare plan enrollments later than two business days before the effective date of coverage. Benefits Administrators who key Medicare-eligible retiree plan changes should also observe this keying guideline for plan changes to Advantage 65-- Medical Only and requests for termination of coverage since late keying under those circumstances could leave the drug benefit open for an additional month's access to coverage.

FBMC Customer Service Offline This Friday Afternoon

Fringe Benefits Management Company (FBMC)'s customer service lines will be unavailable for a period on Friday, February 3, 2006. The closure will begin at 2:45pm EST and will reopen at 5:15pm EST. Customers may access account information during this time by visiting the FBMC Web site at www.fbmc-benefits.com or by calling the IVR at 1-800-342-8017.